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Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Mr. Awsan **Al-Aud** (Yemen)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 49 (see A/63/414, para. 2). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 24th and 29th meetings, on 4 and 25 November 2008. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/63/SR.24 and 29).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/63/L.15 and A/C.2/63/L.45

2. At the 24th meeting, on 4 November, the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind" (A/C.2/63/L.15), which read:

> "*The General Assembly*,
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> "*Recalling* its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988 and 54/222 of 22 December 1999, its decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000 and its resolutions 56/199 of 21 December 2001, 57/257 of 20 December 2002, 58/243 of 23 December 2003, 59/234 of 22 December 2004, 60/197 of 22 December 2005, 61/201 of 20 December 2006 and 62/86 of 10 December 2007 and other resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in eight parts, under the symbol A/63/414 and Add.1-7.

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"*Recalling also* the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

"*Recalling further* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,

"*Recalling* the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'), the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session, held in New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002, the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Milan, Italy, from 1 to 12 December 2003, the outcome of the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties, held in Buenos Aires from 6 to 18 December 2004, the outcome of the eleventh session of the Conference of the Parties and the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Montreal, Canada, from 28 November to 10 December 2005, the outcome of the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Nairobi from 6 to 17 November 2006, and the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007,

"*Reaffirming* the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

"*Recalling* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

"*Remaining deeply concerned* that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks from the negative effects of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects,

"*Noting* that, to date, there are one hundred and ninety-two parties to the Convention, including one hundred and ninety-one States and one regional economic integration organization,

"*Noting also* that, currently, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has attracted one hundred and eighty-two ratifications, accessions, acceptances or approvals, including by thirty-nine parties included in annex I to the Convention,

"*Noting further* the amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol,

"*Noting* the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

"*Noting also* the significance of the scientific findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which contribute positively to the discussions under the Convention and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

"*Noting with appreciation* the initiative of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-first session, in having convened the informal thematic debate on 'Climate change as a global challenge' from 31 July to 2 August 2007,

"*Noting also with appreciation* the initiative of the Secretary-General in having convened the informal high-level event entitled 'The future in our hands: addressing the leadership challenge of climate change' on 24 September 2007, aimed at providing impetus and political support to the Convention and raising awareness of the global challenge of climate change,

"*Reaffirming its commitment* to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system,

"*Taking note* of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

"1. *Stresses* the seriousness of climate change, and calls upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through the implementation of its provisions;

"2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on 16 February 2005 and strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

"3. *Takes note* of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Indonesia from 3 to 15 December 2007;

"4. *Welcomes* the decisions adopted during the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention, and calls for urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities;

"5. *Urges* developed countries to undertake ambitious and enhanced commitments under the Kyoto Protocol in subsequent commitment periods, and also urges the international community to assist developing countries in addressing the consequences of climate change, in particular through new,

additional and predictable financial resources, capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology;

"6. *Welcomes* the launch of the Adaptation Fund during the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol aimed at addressing the needs of developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and looks forward to its early operationalization;

"7. *Recognizes* that climate change poses serious risks and challenges to all countries, particularly to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and calls upon States to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Framework Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and, in this regard, urges all countries to fully implement their commitments under the Convention, to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels, and to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the Convention;

"8. *Also recognizes* the need to provide financial and technical resources, as well as capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology, to assist those developing countries adversely affected by climate change;

"9. *Welcomes* the holding, in Beijing on 7 and 8 November 2008, of the High-level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Technology Transfer;

"10. *Reaffirms* that efforts to address climate change in a manner that enhances the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries and the eradication of poverty should be carried out through promoting the integration of the three components of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner;

"11. *Calls upon* the international community to fulfil the commitments made during the fourth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund;

"12. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and encourages cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

"13. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the

Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

"14. *Invites* the secretariat of the Framework Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

"15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session the sub-item entitled 'Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind'."

3. At its 29th meeting, on 25 November, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations" (A/C.2/63/L.45), submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Andrei Metelitsa (Belarus), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.15.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications (see A/C.2/63/SR.29).

5. Also at the 29th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.45.

6. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of France (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China), Belarus and Sweden (see A/C.2/63/SR.29).

7. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.45, draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.15 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

8. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 61/201 of 20 December 2006 and 62/86 of 10 December 2007 and other resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

Recalling also the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[1] including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[2] in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,[3]

Recalling the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[4] the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[5] and the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007,[6] and the outcomes of all previous sessions,

Reaffirming the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[7] the Mauritius Declaration[8] and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[9]

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] See resolution 55/2.

[3] Ibid., para. 23.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[6] FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1 and 2 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/9/Add.1 and 2.

[7] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[8] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[9] Ibid., annex II.

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[10]

Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks from the negative effects of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects,

Noting that, to date, there are one hundred and ninety-two parties to the Convention, including one hundred and ninety-one States and one regional economic integration organization,

Noting also that, currently, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[11] has attracted one hundred and eighty-three ratifications, accessions, acceptances or approvals, including by thirty-nine parties included in annex I to the Convention,

Noting further the amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol,[12]

Noting the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

Noting also the significance of the scientific findings of the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, providing an integrated scientific, technical and socio-economic perspective on relevant issues and contributing positively to the discussions under the Convention and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

Reaffirming that economic and social development and poverty eradication are global priorities,

Recognizing that deep cuts in global emissions will be required to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Reaffirming its commitment to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system,

Noting with appreciation the efforts of the Secretary-General in raising awareness of the need to respond to the global challenge of climate change,

Taking note of the Beijing High-level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Technology Transfer, held in Beijing on 7 and 8 November 2008, and the third World Climate Conference on the theme "Climate prediction and information for decision-making", to be held in Geneva from 31 August to 4 September 2009,

Acknowledging women as key actors in the efforts towards sustainable development, and recognizing that a gender perspective can contribute to efforts to address climate change,

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[10] See resolution 60/1.

[11] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

[12] FCCC/KP/CMP/2006/10/Add.1, decision 10/CMP.2.

Taking note of the note by the Secretary-General[13] transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[14]

1. *Stresses* the seriousness of climate change, and calls upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] through the urgent implementation of its provisions;

2. *Urges* parties to the Convention, and invites parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[11] to continue to make use of the information contained in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in their work;

3. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on 16 February 2005 and strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

4. *Takes note* of the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Indonesia from 3 to 15 December 2007;[6]

5. *Welcomes* the decisions adopted during the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007, including the Bali Action Plan,[15] by which the Conference of the Parties decided to launch a comprehensive process aimed at enabling the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012, in order to reach an agreed outcome and adopt a decision at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties, and takes note of the work under way in the open-ended ad hoc working group of parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change established under decision 1/CMP.1;[16]

6. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol welcome the launch of the Adaptation Fund during the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol,[17] and notes that developing-country parties to the Kyoto Protocol that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change are eligible for funding from the Adaptation Fund to assist them in meeting the costs of adaptation and look forward to its early operationalization;

7. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Poland to host the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the fourth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Poznán, Poland, from

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[13] A/63/294.

[14] Ibid., sect. I.

[15] See FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1, decision 1/CP.13.

[16] Entitled "Consideration of commitments for subsequent periods for Parties included in Annex I to the Convention under article 3, paragraph 9, of the Kyoto Protocol", as contained in document FCCC/KP/CMP/2005/8/Add.1.

[17] See FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/9/Add.1, decision 1/CMP.3.

1 to 12 December 2008, and looks forward to a successful outcome, including advancement towards an agreed outcome in 2009;

8. *In this regard, also takes note with appreciation*, of the offer of the Government of Denmark to host the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Copenhagen from 30 November to 11 December 2009;

9. *Recognizes* that climate change poses serious risks and challenges to all countries, particularly to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and calls upon States to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Framework Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and, in this regard, urges all countries to fully implement their commitments under the Convention, to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels, and to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the Convention;

10. *Reaffirms* that efforts to address climate change in a manner that enhances the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries and the eradication of poverty should be carried out through promoting the integration of the three components of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner;

11. *Recognizes* the need to provide financial and technical resources, as well as capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology, to assist those developing countries adversely affected by climate change;

12. *Calls upon* the international community to fulfil the commitments made during the fourth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund;

13. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[18] and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[19] and encourages cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

14. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

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[18] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[19] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.

15. *Invites* the secretariat of the Framework Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

16. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session a sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations".